



A STUDY OF SUPERSTITIONS AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN KERALA

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ABSTRACT

Superstitions are beliefs or feelings which are irrational and cannot be explained by reasons or facts. The assessment of superstitiousness as a component of paranormal belief has encountered many conceptual and psychometric difficulties (Harvey j. Irwin). Many superstitions deal with important events in a person's life such as birth and entering adulthood. Superstition is primarily ignorance. Men due to lack of proper culture and education had one time depended upon certain happenings. Effects of superstition on student life are mainly loss of concentration, lack of interest in studies, mental disorder and hampering the development of an individual's personality. To irradiate this, present study made an attempt to study the superstitions of higher secondary school teachers by taking a sample of 200 teachers. The present study also aims to find out the difference between superstition of higher secondary male and female teachers, Christian and Hindu teachers and Science and Language teachers in Pathanamthitta, Kollam and Alapuzha districts in Kerala. The superstitions do not differ significantly between that groups classified in terms of gender, religion and subject of specialization. The analysis and interpretation were made by us in authentic statistical techniques.

KEYWORDS: Study, Superstitions, Higher secondary, School, Teachers, Kerala.

INTRODUCTION

The word superstition is not a useful scientific term because one man's superstition is another man's religion or moral convention. It is common and blind belief that certain events bring good luck or bad luck for a person and that happiness can be foretold by specific unrelated prior events. Superstitious persons have faith in luck, ghosts, evil spirits, omens, supernatural powers etc. They think that these powers govern our success and failure. The measurement of superstitiousness was to play a pivotal role in the development of interest in the construct of paranormal belief. There are various traditions and beliefs that have been followed by Hindu Indians since ancient times. Most of these beliefs, it is argued nowadays, are Superstitions which people follow blindly for the fear of being cursed or harmed by powers or God. However research studies have shown now that some of these beliefs or superstitions have scientific reasons associated with them. The word 'Superstition' is also not a useful scientific term because; one man's superstition is another man's religion or moral conviction. Therefore, it is hard to make out the boundaries of superstition and it is a belief which is irrational and mysterious or a tendency to gain privilege from the supernatural powers. Thus the form of a particular superstition may be decided by environmental and social factor, and the demand to cope with prevailing superstitions.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The quality of a nation depends upon the quality of its citizen's. The quality of the education depends upon to a great extent on the quality of teachers. The quality and effectiveness of the teachers are considered to be associated with their beliefs. Blind belief in superstition is not a quality of a good teacher and also this belief system is transferred to their students. This will harm the development of our nation. So our aim is to eradicate the deep belief in superstition from the minds of the teacher. There is a need to understand teachers' personal superstitious beliefs and practices and how their beliefs influence their performance in the classroom. Although statistical studies show that the uneducated poorest countries tend to be more superstitious. Teachers can establish a positive classroom environment that promotes the nature of their students. Therefore an attempt is made in this study to find the level of superstitious belief of the subjects selected for the study. Through their interactions they influence the belief system of their students. Further they may also show interest in dispelling superstitions from the minds of the younger generation by promoting a rational thinking.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

India is a veritable museum of superstitions. Instead of using the phrase 'Superstitious belief' it is better to use the phrase 'Superstitiousness of a belief'. A belief which is most acceptable in the light of present day Scientific

Knowledge can be considered as the least superstitious belief.

Superstition is primarily an ignorance. Men due to lack of proper culture and education had one time depended and to some extent relied upon certain happenings, mostly in the nature of an explanatory. Belief in the ability to attract good luck provides a greater illusion of control than the belief that an event, such as breaking a mirror, unavoidability brings bad luck by RICHARD MORRIS & MARK D GRIFFITHS (2013). The findings here provide preliminary support for the idea

that superstition, paranormal belief, sensation seeking, impulsivity and irrational beliefs, about gambling related factors, probability and chance are involved in affinity for gambling. India is a land of superstitions and a child perceives and devours superstitions from his/her very childhood.

The degree to which a person feels the desire or need to control events in their lives also influences how superstitious a person is. Internal and external locus of control is associated with belief in superstition. We the superstitious engage in superstitious behaviors in order to regain a sense of control in an otherwise uncontrollable situation KAITLYN HANISKO (2013). There is a relationship between gender and tendency to superstition by ROGHAYESH EBRAHIMI ZAD (2014) in Superstitious beliefs and some of its causes. The belief in superstitions is a general characteristic of a subject and not limited to a certain category of superstitions. The more a person is superstitious the more it will allow more time performing rituals OLGA DOMNICA MOLDOVAN (2016).

AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to find out the level of Superstition of higher secondary school teachers in Kerala. Also we have to find out whether there is any significant difference in superstitious belief between male and female, Hindu and Christian, Science and Arts higher secondary school teachers. The study related to the superstitions of teachers shall be of paramount importance to all, because teachers are the makers of the society. Therefore a study on this direction shall have social, educational and philosophical value

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the level of superstitions of higher secondary school teachers.
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference in superstition of male and female higher secondary school teachers.
3. To find out whether there is any significant difference in superstitious level of Hindu and Christian higher secondary school teachers.
4. To find out whether there is any significant difference in the superstitious level of Science and Arts teachers in higher secondary school.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

In this study the following null hypotheses are to be used

1. There is no significant difference in the superstitious levels of Male and Female higher secondary school teachers.
2. There is no significant difference in the superstitious level of Hindu and Christian higher secondary school teachers.
3. There is no significant difference in the superstitious level of Science and Arts teachers in higher secondary schools.

RESEARCH METHOD

The investigator followed the normative survey method for the present study. The population selected is school teachers and the sample used here are higher secondary school teachers in Kerala. Researcher collected data from 200 higher secondary school teachers from 12 higher secondary schools in Pathanamthitta, kollam and Alapuzha districts in Kerala. The researcher used stratified random collection technique for sample collection. Sub sample collected on the basis of Gender (Male-40, Female-160), Caste (Hindu-131, Christian-69) and subject they taught in the school (Science-96, Arts-104). Use t-test to find out the significant difference among mean scores of the above sample. Here the reliability of the scale is found to be 0.73 and in the opinion of the experts in the field, the test possessed face validity and content validity.

Table 1: Distribution of the total sample and sub-samples based on gender, caste and subject.

Sl. No	Name of the school	Number of Higher Secondary Teachers						
		Total	Gender		Caste		Subject	
			Male	Female	Hindu	Christian	Science	Arts
1	GHSS Omalloor	15	3	12	10	5	6	9
2	GHSS Thottakkonam	15	3	12	11	4	7	8
3	St.Mary's MMHSS Adoor	17	3	14	—	17	8	9
4	PSVPMHSS Ayravon	18	4	14	18	—	9	9
5	SNDPHSS Chenneerkara	16	3	13	16	—	9	7
7	SNVHSS Angadical	19	5	14	19	—	10	9
8	GBHSS Kayamkulam	16	3	13	11	5	9	7
9	GHSS Mavelikara	19	4	15	13	6	7	12
10	GHSS Sankaramangalam	18	4	14	12	6	8	10
11	GHSS Elimullumplackal	13	2	11	8	5	5	8
12	MTHSS Pathanamthitta	15	2	13	—	15	6	9
Total		200	40	160	131	69	96	104

TOOLS OF THE STUDY

1. General Information Schedule
2. Superstitious belief scale

The present investigation is concerned with superstition among higher secondary school teachers. As there was no appropriate tool for measuring the above variables. The investigator developed certain relevant tool for measuring the superstitious belief using questionnaire consists of 40 statements (35 positive and 5 negative statements) to measure the various aspects of superstitious beliefs in our daily life.

Each statements has the options namely 'yes', 'No'. The response of the subjects was scored by 1 & 0 respectively for positive statements and the scoring procedure is reversed for the negative statements. Also personal data sheet to collect the details regarding caste, gender, subject of teaching, age, nature of school, marital status etc. Here the reliability of the scale is found to be 0.73 and in the opinion of the experts in the field, the test possessed face validity and content validity.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUE

Descriptive Statistics: Mean, Standard deviation

Interferential Statistics: t-test

Random sampling methods were used for the present study. The sample for the present study consists of 200 higher secondary school teachers in Pathanamthitta, Kollam and Alapuzha districts in Kerala.

VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

The independent variable of the study is Superstition and a general data sheet was also used to measure some demographic variables like Gender (Male&Female), Caste (Hindu&Christian) and Subject (Science&Arts) they are teaching in the higher secondary schools.

PROCEDURE

The investigator used the statistical technique for the study is mean, standard deviation and t-test. He visited various higher secondary schools located at Pathanamthitta districts in Kerala. The relevant tool have been prepared in

advance with a program of action are administered to the sample population. Maximum care has been given for the purpose of test administration.

The findings of the data were made by using test of significance of difference between independent groups (t-test). Mean values of superstition and standard deviation of each group were computed and calculated and t-value to find out the significance of difference between means. Females have high superstitious scores than males. Here we discuss it through the scores they obtained.

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

The responses of the higher secondary teachers selected for the study were collected and subjected to statistical analysis. The details of analysis are given in the following tables.

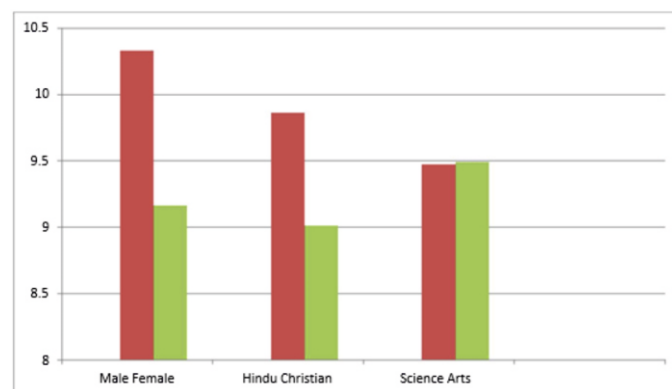
Table 2: Basic statistical constants of the variable 'Superstitions of Higher secondary School Teachers' based on total sample.

Sample	N	Mean	Median	Mode	Range	Average Deviation	Standard Deviation
Higher Secondary School Teachers	200	9.5	7	0	40	7.03	8.95

Table 3: Superstition of higher secondary School Teachers based on Gender Caste and Subject of Specialization: Level of Significance

Sub Sample		N	Mean	S D	Ratio Critical	Significant level(0.05)
Gender	Male	40	10.33	10.96	0.63	Not Significant
	Female	160	9.16	8.38		
Caste	Hindu	131	9.86	9.3	0.65	Not Significant
	Christian	69	9.01	8.52		
Subject	Science	96	9.47	8.97	1.57	Not Significant
	Arts	104	9.49	8.98		

From the Table it is found that the male and female higher secondary school teachers are not differ significantly in the mean values of their superstition, as the t-value calculated (0.63) does not exceed 1.96 the value set at 0.05 level of significance. As the mean value for male group of teachers is greater than that of female group teachers. The critical ratio value calculated for superstition of teachers from Christian and Hindu community is 0.65 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. The differences of mean scores on superstition for Hindu are higher than Christian teachers. The table shows that Arts teachers and Science teachers do not significantly differ in their superstition as the critical ratio value (1.57) is below the limit set for 0.05 level of significance.



Histogram: Comparison of scores on Superstition for various groups of subject.

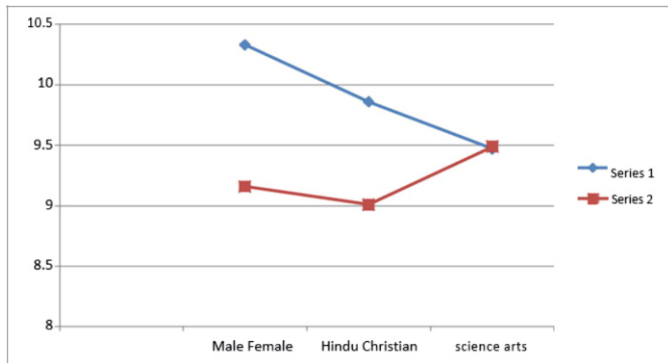
TENABILITY OF THE HYPOTHESES

On the light of the significant findings drawn out from the study the hypotheses that there is no significant difference in the superstitious belief between male and female higher secondary school teachers and there is no significant difference in the superstitious belief among Hindu and Christian higher secondary school teachers were accepted and the third hypotheses that there is no significant difference in the superstitious belief between science and arts teachers in higher secondary schools were also accepted.

FINDINGS AND INFERENCES

1. There exists no significant difference among male and female teachers in the mean scores of their superstition.
2. There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of superstition among Hindu and Christian teachers.

3. There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of superstition among Arts and science teachers



From the above figure and in the study of Olga Domnica Moldovan (2016) the women were found to be more superstitious in the superstition related to animals. Women also tend to give more time to conduct rituals. Most people believe in the existence of at least one paranormal or combinations of several paranormal. The findings of the study shows that the male and female higher secondary school teachers differ in the mean values of their superstition and not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Through this Female teachers are more superstitious than male teachers. Hindu and Christian Higher Secondary School Teachers are also not significantly differing at 0.05 level of significance. With the help of the mean scores Christian teachers are less superstitious than Hindus. But the superstitious belief of teachers does not significantly differ with their Subject of specialization.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

On the whole, the variable superstitions are not found to be positively correlated. But the female teachers have obtained high mean scores in superstition than male teachers. But at the same time the mean scores of teachers who are belonging to Hindu community are very high than Christians. Also there is no significant difference between science and arts teachers in their superstitious beliefs.

Thus it can be concluded that the female teachers are more vulnerable than males with regard to their superstitious beliefs. The study reveals the need for giving more scientific explanation for their belief systems. Research proposal and results from the study of Roghayyeh Ebrahimi Zad are 'there is a relationship between gender and tendency to superstition. Increasing the awareness of people by encouraging them to study and participate in academic and research areas. Deal with the media promoting superstition'. With the help of this study we hope to eradicate the deep belief in superstition from the minds of the higher secondary teachers.

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